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Institutional Section

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FOURTEENTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Report of the Director-General

First Supplementary Report: Update on the internal reform

Purpose of the document

Report on progress made in respect of the implementation of the internal reform agenda.

Relevant strategic objective: Cross-cutting.

Policy implications: More effective use of human and financial resources to serve the needs of Members.

Legal implications: None.

Financial implications: None.

Follow-up action required: None.

Author unit: Office of the Deputy Director-General for Management and Reform (DDG/MR).

Related documents: ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, and accompanying resolution on strengthening the ILO's capacity to assist its Members' efforts to reach its objectives in the context of globalization, International Labour Conference, 97th Session, Geneva, 2008; GB.317/INS/12/2.

Introduction

1. With the structural reforms involving the Management and Reform and Policy portfolios in place, as presented in the second progress report to the Governing Body,¹ the focus has shifted to the operational dimensions of the reform commitment. In particular, work has advanced on the review of field operations and structure, technical cooperation, human resources policies and practices, administrative services and communications. Action in these areas will lay the foundations for securing significant improvements in the way that the ILO responds to its constituents and delivers its services, and for achieving greater efficiency, effectiveness and impact. At the same time, action has been taken to consolidate earlier reform measures, while also concentrating on defining concrete and time-bound deliverables and the need to sustain and accelerate delivery.
2. All reform and implementation activities, studies and reviews continue to be undertaken within the limits of available resources. The practice of establishing in-house teams to review and make recommendations for each main reform activity has continued with inputs from independent professional consultants, where appropriate. Implementation of decisions is overseen and monitored by the Senior Management Team.
3. This document focuses primarily on the review of the field operations and structure, technical cooperation, communications and administrative services. Two areas of the reform commitment are the subject of separate documents submitted to the Governing Body and are not dealt with in this paper:
 - (a) proposals arising from the Director-General's reform plan of action in the area of human resources management (GB.320/PFA/13); and
 - (b) follow-up to the discussion on the dissolution of the International Institute for Labour Studies and the establishment of the central Research Department (GB.320/INS/14/2).

Field operations and structure

4. A cornerstone of this phase of the reform programme is the comprehensive assessment of resourcing, relationships and service delivery models being undertaken through the Field Operations and Structure and Technical Cooperation Review. This Review has highlighted the complexity of ILO operations, in particular with regard to relations between headquarters and the field, and identifies a number of measures for consideration to embed a "One ILO" approach across ILO activities. To this end, the Review also makes proposals on how to achieve better relations, understanding and cooperation between headquarters and field units to produce improved in-country work. This orientation is in keeping with the new organizational arrangements being put in place for the activities associated with the areas of critical importance (ACIs).
5. The Review Team submitted its report to the Director-General at the end of December 2013 and it was discussed by the Global Management Team at a retreat in January 2014.² The Director-General is carefully considering the proposals in order to arrive at decisions on issues relating to the field structure and operations, and technical cooperation, taking into account considerations of quality, responsiveness, relevance, efficiency and impact in country-level operations.

¹ GB.319/INS/14/1.

² The Review Team's report has been made available to staff and can be accessed through the following link: <http://labordoc.ilo.org/record/460807?ln=en>.

Communications

6. The implementation of the decisions arising from the review of internal and external communications has moved forward with action being taken with respect to the four broad objectives of the communications reform.
7. Given the key strategic role of internal communications, strengthening the Office's capacity has been important. A head of internal communications has been appointed and will now lead the design and implementation of a comprehensive Office-wide internal communication strategy. This will require the systematic engagement of staff at all levels and will involve a review of practices and tools to facilitate and ensure effective internal communication.
8. Meanwhile, measures have been taken to improve information sharing, including through a new periodic newsletter and the maintenance of the Reform website.
9. ILO advocacy capability is being strengthened with the introduction of a "communications for development" dimension to ILO field work, especially in the context of the ACIs.
10. A collaborative space has been developed to allow communications specialists at headquarters and in the field to share information and work together. This collaborative space will support globally consistent and coordinated communications activities.
11. A programme is being designed to engage headquarters and field directors and specialists with the communications reform roadmap. This will facilitate developing a single, integrated approach to communications.
12. The ILO global website (www.ilo.org) has been redesigned to work equally well on a variety of platforms to best meet users' requirements. The new design is being tested and will be released soon.

Administrative services

13. A number of reviews of internal administrative functions are under way or have recently been completed. These reviews have focused principally on the area of file, records and communications (for example, telephone and mail) management. The relevant business processes are being analysed to identify opportunities for raising service levels and improving administrative efficiency. The outcomes will also facilitate the reorganization of functional responsibilities between units in the Management and Reform Portfolio.
14. The identification of specific areas where future action might be required linked to the Field Operations and Structure and Technical Cooperation Review has started and will be pursued to support decisions taken.

Conclusion

15. The implementation of the reform agenda has been moving progressively from a focus on structures to operations, practices and, critically, results. Transparency, teamwork and responsiveness continued to be primary factors in driving the reform as they will be the key to success. Considerable effort will now need to be invested in ensuring that all components of the reform agenda connect seamlessly and that new ways of working take root to meet the objective of improving the quality, efficiency, effectiveness and impact of all ILO services. To help chart performance in this regard, work is being finalized on ways of measuring the impact of reform initiatives.